

# SKIING HERITAGE

JOURNAL of the INTERNATIONAL SKIING HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Volume 5 Number 1

May 1993



## First I.S.H.A. Lifetime Achievement Awards

The third weekend of March saw the inauguration of a new I.S.H.A. program: Lifetime Achievement Awards. The award ceremonies, held at Sugarbush Resort in Vermont, were arranged by I.S.H.A. in cooperation with the New England Ski Museum.

The Lifetime Achievement Awards are designed to recognize excellence in the dissemination and preservation of ski history, in keeping with I.S.H.A.'s aim to promote accurate and compelling accounts of our sport.

A Lifetime Achievement Award in History was given posthumously to Sir Arnold Lunn, the founder of the British Ski Year Book and author of several outstanding histories of the sport published in the first three decades of this century. Bernard Lunn of New York was on hand at the ceremonial banquet to receive the award on behalf of his grandfather.

Lunn's award reads in part, "Arnold Lunn's visions drove alpine skiing out of its narrow confines into the world at large. He is given this award in recognition of his shaping of the sport through word and deed to an extent that, had he not lived, skiing would at best hardly resemble the form it has today."

The second award, the Lifetime Achievement Award in Journalism, was received personally by John Auran, who is currently the working journalist with the longest record as an active ski writer in America.

His award was given "for a lifetime of work so fruitfully interwoven with the rise of ski journalism in this country that he incontrovertibly played a continuing, creditable and considerable part in its historic development."

Eighty I.S.H.A. associates and friends convened for two days of skiing, and a reception and banquet, functions made possible through the splendid cooperation and support from the Sugarbush Resort, its vice president for marketing, Bob Gillen, and special events coordinator Chris Woods.

The evening concluded with a showing of "White Ecstasy," a classic 1931 ski film, directed by Arnold Fanck with Hannes Schneider and Leni Riefenstahl in the lead parts. Shown in video form, the restoration of the original film, with new English subtitles, was undertaken by the New England Ski Museum, made possible in part by financial support from I.S.H.A. through its Special Opportunities Fund. NESM director Linda Gray was on hand to talk about the video, the latest in the museum's ongoing project of converting valuable old ski films to video format.

President Mason Beckley headed a committee of four, to select persons suitable for recognition by I.S.H.A., through this new program. Plans are for this to be an annual recognition celebration. \*

Morten Lund

## Bigger Better 'Heritage'

This issue of the I.S.H.A. quarterly newsletter carries a 2000 word piece on the importance of Hannes Schneider's ski films like "The White Ecstasy" to skiing history (see page 8).



Photo courtesy of Herbert Schneider

Carrying a feature article of this length becomes possible by increasing the number of pages to 12 from the previous limit of eight pages. The cost of increasing the newsletter by fifty per cent is being borne by the recent annual contributions to the ISHA operating fund (names of the donors are carried in an insert in this issue).

The photographs in the Schneider story are a selection of publicity stills taken on location during the filming of "The White Ecstasy" and were donated by Herbert Schneider. \*

**SKIING HERITAGE**

Journal of the International Skiing History Association

Published Quarterly

Editor: Glenn A. Parkinson

Publisher: Earline V. Marsh

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## Help I.S.H.A. Expand Its Good Work

I.S.H.A. is preserving our skiing heritage through several specific methods: encouraging the dissemination of historical information through *Skiing Heritage*, its quarterly newsletter; facilitating communication between the various ski museums; supporting the rehabilitation of historic ski films and their sale through museums; computerizing lists of collectors and their collections to aid museums and researchers; and organizing meetings that bring together I.S.H.A. members with living legends of ski history to further its discussion and appreciation.

The more members I.S.H.A. has the more power it can apply to the preservation, discussion and dissemination of skiing history. Please encourage your skiing friends to join -- no dues or subscription costs. An interest in the history and heritage of skiing is the only credential required. Use the inserted form or write to I.S.H.A., 499 Town Hill Rd, New Hartford, CT 06057.



"It's my friend who wants to learn. I learned yesterday."

SKI JANUARY, 1955

## Tips and Tales

### Age Is Not a Barrier

*One of the truly delightful aspects to skiing with I.S.H.A. Associates is the passion they have for the sport. Advancing years don't stop them from enjoying the mountains. These two anecdotes illustrate that point.*

Olaf Rodegard, age 82, was asked what he used to do for tricks on skis in the 1930's. "We used to do royal christies," Olaf said. "Here let me show you." He then proceeded to do a series of royal christies through the spring corn.

It was a bright, sunny day at Sun Valley. The mountain had a foot of new, light snow. By 10:30 the powder was pretty well skied out and the sun had turned what was left into a heavy, ski grabbing mess. At 2:30 Wolfgang Lert, age 76, looked at us and said "I will show you a secret." He then led us into the trees where neither the sun nor other skiers had gotten to the powder.

### Ernie Blake's Story

Rick Richards took many hours of tape recorded conversations with Ernie, and friends such as Freid Pfeifer, Howard Head, Max Dercum, Alf Engen and Dave McCoy and developed *Ski Pioneers*. These first person stories, combined with photographs, give a wonderful look at U.S. skiing's early days. *Ski Pioneers* is available for \$39.95 (not including shipping). For more information call 1-800-435-4742 or write to: Dry Gulch Publishing, P.O.Box 310, Arroyo Seco, New Mexico, 87514.

### We Made The New York Times

"There's A History Behind The Slopes" proclaims the title of a recent New York Times article by Janet Nelson. She writes, "People have been skiing in North America since the mid 1800s and for centuries in the Alps and Scandinavia, so it is not surprising that there are numerous ski museums around the world as well as a new association for ski history buffs."

### Happy Birthday, Bill

Bill Berry, whose career as a ski writer began in the 1920s, celebrated his 90th birthday on April 7th, at his home in Reno, Nevada. Happy birthday, Bill!

### Snowshoe Thompson Stamp

From the Sons of Norway, Snowshoe Thompson Lodge No. 78 we have word of an effort to promote a commemorative stamp in honor of Snowshoe Thompson, the "mailman of the Sierra Mountains, to memorialize one of the most unique chapters in the history of the United States Postal Service." To support this effort write to PO Box 1390, Yuba City, California, 95991.

I.S.H.A. Founder Luggi Foeger, assistant director of St. Anton's famous ski school in the 1920s, well-known racer, teacher, ski school director, area manager, and author, died in January.

## Two Museums Make Their Debut

Throughout the skiing world, several ski-related museums have been talked about, are in various stages of planning, or are now opening their doors to the public.

Roy Newton, founder of the Vermont Ski Museum, located in Brandon, says, "There needs to be a place where we can remember the past." Since 1988 Newton has worked to open the Vermont Ski Museum, and on May 15th he realized his dream, as the museum officially opened with ceremonies including several Vermont skiing luminaries past and present.

The Colorado School of Mines recently held an open house to launch The Ropeway Studies Information Center. Ropeways are transportation systems that use wire rope or cable. This would include cable cars and materials tramways, such as those used in mines, as well as ski lifts.

Charles (Chuck) Dwyer, a retired tramway engineer with the U.S. Forest Service and an I.S.H.A. Associate, donated his collection of books, journals and magazines to form the core of the facility's collection.

Joanne Lerud, CSM Library Director, has designed a data-

base to make the information available around the world. She said, "The Ropeways Studies Information Center at CSM will be used by people in the ski and lift manufacturing industry, by CSM students, and by members of the code committee of the American National Standards Institute, who devise national safety codes and standards for aerial tramways and lifts, and for surface lifts and tows."

"Opening a museum is a surprisingly complex project," says Newton. "It was much more work than I had anticipated. The hardest part was the financial end. Gathering the artifacts was relatively easy, because many people are looking for a place for their things. I look at what we have and I am pretty amazed," concludes Newton. ♦

Joanne Lerud can be contacted at Colorado School of Mines,  
1500 Illinois, Golden, CO 80401

Roy Newton can be contacted at Box 181, Middlebury, VT 05753

**Please lend a hand. Support a ski museum.**

## Sun Valley Seminars and Films

*The presentations given at the second annual  
I.S.H.A. Gathering held in March at Sun Valley.*

### Sun Valley History

Floyd McCracken, Sun Valley historian, spoke and showed slides on the history of Sun Valley, from its origins as a sheep raising town. Gretchen Fraser, Don Fraser and Bill Janss shared their memories. Now living in Sun Valley, all three were on the 1940 Olympic team.

### "Winter Magic" Vintage Film

John Jay narrated his movie "Winter Magic Around the World", which was recorded live at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center as part of their Travel-Adventure Film series. ("Winter Magic Around The World" is available for \$29.95 plus \$3 shipping, by writing to John Jay Productions, PO Box 3131, Ranch Santa Fe, CA 92067)

### Tale of the Tenth

Morten Lund read from a manuscript about Freidl Pfeifer, on Freidl's involvement with the Tenth Mountain division in Italy. Especially moving were some of Freidl's memories of the actual fighting, and of his serious injury in Italy.

### "The White Ecstasy"

The New England Ski Museum showed "The White Ecstasy" ("Der Weisse Raush") to an audience of over 100. "The White Ecstasy" was the final collaboration of Dr. Arnold Fanck and Hannes Schneider. Also starring Leni Riefenstahl, the film was a big success when it was first released. The skiing, scenery and humor that made it a hit in 1931 have not waned over the years. The Idaho Mountain Express wrote a half page article on the showing. ("The White Ecstasy" is available for \$30 plus \$4

## BEAN'S NEW SKI BOOT

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### American Ski Annual 1937

shipping by writing to New England Ski Museum, PO Box 267, Franconia, NH 03580)

### A Pictorial History of Skiing

Stan Cohen, author and publisher of "A Pictorial History Of Skiing" presented a slide show of photos from his book. Stan's presentation stimulated a lively discussion which covered many sides ofskiing history.

### Turns We Have Made

A panel discussion on the history of technique, chaired by Doug Pfeifer, included Max Dercum, a coach in the 1930s, Ralph Harris, ski instructor at Sun Valley for 25 years, Bill Lash, Force behind the founding of the American Ski Technique, Wolfgang Lert, and Morten Lund, an early promoter of GLM. ♦

## For the Record: Correcting Errors

Bob Baumrucker from San Francisco writes:

Many examples of careless ski writing and inaccuracies in commonly accepted history exist. The most practical way I can see to defend against this perpetration of errors would be to bring them out into the open. Ask your readers for examples. Create a column where they can be exposed. Just to know that someone is watching should help keep writers on the "qui vive."

We agree, Bob. This new column *For the Record* is a place for readers to offer their help in correcting errors.

The first correction comes as a result of one of our own typos in volume 4 number 4, in the article "Ivar Halvorsen: The Complete Ski-Maker", when we said Odd Martinsen skied in the 1068 Olympics not the 1968 Olympics.

The author Michael Brady adds,

"It's comforting to note that the typographic gremlin also exists in your machinery: let's all hope that not many readers catch the typo in the caption under the photo on page 5, as the racing skis pictured could hardly have been used two years after the Battle of Hastings."

### The Muscle-Bound Tow Rope Gremlin



He waits till you have a good grip on the rope and then he snaps your head off with a scream of delight. His brother runs the tow engine.

Ski Illustrated, March 1944

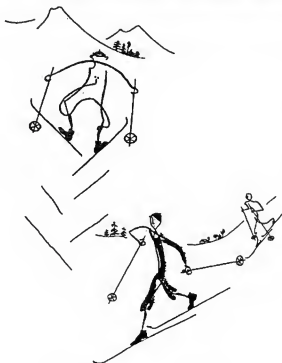
### The Pigeon-Toed Bare Spot Gremlin



They stand around pigeon-toed all summer. Then when snow flies they move onto trails and stand with their heads under 1/16th inch of powder.

"I'm convinced skiers have more fun than anybody. See you skiing somewhere, sometime."

Jerry Hlatt, *Western Skiing*, Feb, 1946



Ski Illustrated, March 1946

## The Origin Of Long Johns?

I don't know where the name Long Johns comes from, but I know of one possibility. The story involves Hjalmar Hvam, John Elvrum and my husband, Corey Gustafson, Cascade Ski Club jumpers in a tournament in the early thirties.

Corey had just bought new 100% wool underwear -- it was obvious. He had bulges around his wrists and ankles where he had turned up the excess. The boys always bought underwear a few sizes too big to allow for shrinkage when they washed it (which they did at least once a year).

That evening Corey changed into something more comfortable and left the room for the after-ski activities. Hard as it is to believe, Hjalmar and John were staying in to get a good night's rest. John spotted Corey's underwear draped over the bedpost and held it up for inspection. "You know, I don't think it's big enough for him," Hjalmar agreed. "Let's stretch it."

They hung it taut as a ping pong net between the bedposts. That's what Corey stumbled over when he came back in during the wee small hours. "Ja, he was just hopping mad," John claimed. "Ve gave him a couple more year's wear and he didn't even appreciate it."

Fran Gustafson

Fran Gustafson is a member of the Ancient Skiers, a group who skied on Mt. Rainier prior to World War II. Member Irv Pratt collected stories from other members and compiled them into a book. "People seemed to enjoy the stories," he says. Irv and the Ancient Skiers are currently working to open a museum to display the history and heritage of skiing in the Pacific Northwest. ❄

## Readers Respond: Early Somersaults

I would argue that freestyle skiing has been around since at least 1906. I am enclosing an article from the American Ski Annual 1944 and a photo of John Rudd, of Duluth Minnesota, who began somersaults on skis in 1906 and traveled in special exhibitions, performing throughout the U.S. and Canada. This brought large audiences to watch the "dare-devils" perform and helped perpetuate the thought of skiing as a dangerous sport.

I have enclosed another photo showing Dick Bowler "Looping The Loop" on skis at Newport New Hampshire's Winter Carnival around 1925. I have other photos of such early performances and believe these are truly representative examples of early freestyle skiing.

Gary Schwartz



JOHN RUDD, of Duluth, Turning a Complete Somersault on Skis.

John Rudd turning a complete somersault on skis

Back in the early 1920's Johnny Carleton used to somersault off the jump at Dartmouth. He was, I believe, a Hanover native, a Dartmouth grad about 1924 and on the 1924 Olympic team. He had a companion in somersaulting, Dick Bowler, son of "Doc" Bowler the college's long time athletic trainer.

The somersault was executed with a forward turn. I believe it was first performed on the "Little Jump", a natural hill with a very unelevated take-off, and capable of jumps only 100 feet. The trestle jump went up in the middle 1920's, I think. At least it was there when I entered college in 1928. It would have made the feat easier, with an elevated take-off, but I don't know of anyone trying it when I was in college and on the team.

Marvin Chandler, Dartmouth 1932

Commenting on the second Dartmouth Winter Carnival held in 1912 "Dartmouth Out O'Doors" (printed in 1913) says, "The work of little twelve year old Dickie Bowler on the big jump was the feature of the afternoon."

Dick Bowler "looping the loop" at Newport, NH Winter Carnival

Bill Berry sent us a copy of "History of the National Ski Association and The Ski Sport", dated 1931, which included this piece on trick skiing. Axel did this flip about 1913.

### Most Daring Skier in History

Mr. Axel Hendricksen who gained fame as an exponent of trick skiing will always be remembered by the followers of the sport for his skill in dare devil leaps on skis. He was an unusually fine jumper and won numerous prizes but to us he stands out far above the other skiers because of his skill in making jumps in which he used to ride the slide and when in mid-air thrill us with his somersault turns. I have seen him perform off the slide at Duluth in the early days and to Axel Hendricksen we of the Sport will always doff our hats and admire. (Note: others who have made somersault jumps are as follows: Hans Hansen, B. Bishop, J. Carleton, D. Bowler and John Rudd.)

Harold Grinden



Axel Hendricksen

We have been asking for stories from the history of freestyle skiing, to give us glimpses into activities of early freestyle, or trick skiers. Do you have stories of early freestyle turns? Who do you remember doing the first trick you saw on skis?



"The gathering was wonderful!"  
Bill & Linda



"What a beautiful night and what a friendly crowd!"  
Kathleen St. Anthony



Elva Dornan, Bob and Susan Dornan with Australia at the banquet



A week of wonderful sking

"The skiing, friends, new movies and a wonderful week!"  
P. J. & M. J.



James and Patricia "Duckin's"



"A grand time both on and off the slopes."  
Clair and Doug Pfeiffer



Bob and Linda Gray smiling after their "red hot" performance.

"I hope we will have another gathering just like this one!"  
Bill & Linda



"A wonderful and memorable week!"  
P. J. & M. J.



of the 4th Association



Costumed and



Bill and Linda



Jerry Smith with "Duckin's" and the singers



Bill & Linda



Bill and Linda



Bill and Linda



Bill and Linda



Bill and Linda



Bill and Linda



Bill and Linda



Bill and Linda

# Sun Valley Annual Gathering April 2, 1993

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Max Deacon, John Jay and Max Deacon

"It was wonderful to see old friends who get so much fun from the present and from the future."  
Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon

"Delightful skiing, historically instructive, the Banquet was inspiring and nostalgic."  
Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon



Wolfgang Lott, John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon

"I'll leave the lovely lady at my home."



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon

"What a great pleasure and honor to meet and ski with winners of American Alpine! It was a great affair!"  
John Jay

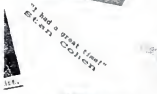


John Jay and Max Deacon

"One of the great events of my life!"  
Bob Atkinson



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon

"A great experience!"  
Bandy Haviland



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon

"My high point: skiing in a group of five I was the youngest -- at 76!"  
Wolfgang Lott



John Jay and Max Deacon



John Jay and Max Deacon

# The Films of Hannes Schneider

by Morten Lund

In the history of alpine skiing, one man stands head and shoulders above the rest. Johannes Schneider, born in 1890, son of a farmer in the hamlet of Stuben in Austria's Arlberg Pass. In 1907 at age 16, he became the first full-time ski guide hired by Hotel Post in nearby St. Anton. Thereafter, Schneider, more than any other, was responsible for the transformation of alpine skiing from a mountain hiking sport to a sport of speed and style.

In 1919, "Hannes" Schneider established an independent ski school in St. Anton and laid the entire foundation for the ski teaching profession as we know it today. He invented the era's dominant ski technique, Arlberg, the first technique in which each level developed logically from the previous — in marked contrast to the grab-bag of turns skiers were being taught elsewhere. Fifteen years after he introduced Arlberg, Schneider operated by far the largest ski school in Europe and had attained the status of teaching master to the entire world.

His influence ran east to Japan, south to Australia and west to California.

His startling transformation of the sport was at least partly due to a recently-invented technology, the movie, and film-making.

Between 1920 and 1931, Schneider appeared in at least ten films and that gave him a formidable lead on the rest of the school directors in Europe. As Schneider himself wrote in 1937, "It would hardly have been possible to make the Arlberg technique so popular throughout the world in so short a time had I not had the opportunity to show what I was able to do in films."

Making ski films in the great outdoors during the 1920s involved enormous difficulties. Luckily a man equal to the task appeared on the scene: Arnold Fanck of Freiburg-in-Breisgau in Germany's Black Forest. In 1913, Fanck made his first film, with a camera cranked by hand. It was probably the first ski mountaineering



The "hounds", or skiers, above, shown chasing Schneider and Leni Riefenstahl, who played "the foxes", were Austria's best and included Rudi Matt, later FIS champion. In spite of the differences necessitated by softer boots and slacker bindings, skiers such as Guzzi Lantschner (below) showed that cliff jumping was not just for today's films.

film in history and probably the first ski film, period. Its small success decided Fanck to do a documentary on ski technique.

He had already determined to use Schneider as a demonstrator, but World War I intervened so that it was the spring of 1920 when Fanck had Schneider join shooting sessions at Garmisch in Bavaria. The film eventually became *Das Wunder des Schneeschuhs* or *The Wonder of the Skis*, history's first ski technique film.

"Already in the first days, as I observed Schneider in his runs for the film," Fanck noted, "it became clear to me that despite all the skiing I had studied, both on the race course and in natural terrain, I had never seen such a complete, finished and well-rounded technique."

Fanck filmed Schneider's flowing S-turns and spectacular jumps against stunning mountain panoramas, then spent the following summer converting hundreds of short, disjointed scenes into a convincing film proving that alpine skiing at high speed could be a superbly controlled sport. The film premiered in October 1920 at Freiburg. It was shown triumphantly the length and breadth of Europe; by the following winter, hundreds converged on St. Anton demanding to "ski like Schneider."

Fanck quite naturally wanted to capitalize on all this quickly; he also wanted to try his hand at directing a dramatic film. Fanck convinced Germany's largest film production company, UFA, to finance an adventure film, *Der Kampf mit den Bergen*, or *The Battle Against the Mountain*, in which Schneider played the trusty mountaineer guiding actress Ilse Rohde in a dangerous traverse of the Lyskamm above Zermatt. Schneider not only carried the heavy gear and played the lead role but had to use all his real expertise to keep the group alive. The route lay across deadly





snow-covered crevasses en route to the safety of the Betemps Hut. Sepp Allgeier, the cameraman, shot the entire film in a single day's excruciatingly taxing endeavor.

The film brought UFA a sizable profit. This began a long relationship between UFA, Fanck and Schneider. The two friends made eight more films for UFA in as many years. Writing about these films of Fanck, the film historian Seigfried Kracauer summed up (in *From Caligari to Hitler*), as follows:

"These films were extraordinary in that they captured the most grandiose aspects of nature at a time when the German screen in general offered nothing but studio-made scenery . . . Fanck grew more and more keen on combining precipices and passion, inaccessible steepes and insoluble human conflicts. Every year brought a new drama in the mountains. But the fictional element did not interfere with an abundance of documentary shots of the silent world of high altitudes. As documentaries, these films were incomparable achievement. Whoever saw them will remember the glittering white of glaciers against a sky dark in contrast, the magnificent play of clouds forming mountains above mountains, the ice stalactites hanging down from roofs and windowsills of some small chalet and, inside crevasses, weird ice structures awakened to an iridescent life by torchlights of a nocturnal rescue party."

Schneider and Fanck's third film together was shot at St. Moritz early in 1921: *Eine Fuchsjagd (auf Schneeschuhen) durchs Engadin*, or *A Fox Hunt (on Skis) through the Engadine*. This was the original ski-chase film—the English-language version was called simply *The Chase*. Schneider was the fox; to play the hounds, Fanck had collected 18 German and Norwegian hot-shots.

Lodging this crew at St. Moritz was so expensive that Fanck ran out of money. To finish the film, Fanck suspended shooting and with Schneider hurried over to St. Christoph with its cheap lodging to make a quickie featuring Schneider clowning his way down the mountains, pretending to be a beginner getting into a series of ludicrous scrapes.

The money from this film enabled Fanck to finish the "Fox Chase" at St. Christoph, incidentally capturing on film the first parallel turns of the Arlberg System: Schneider had begun to take his skis side by side through the entire turn.

"Fox Chase" opened in the fall of 1922 to lavish praise. The newspaper *Nationalzeitung's* critic wrote that "The 'Fuchsjagd' manifests the originality and close ties to nature, the health and joy of the guild of skiers. Hannes Schneider, as he sits there so plain and simple and finally accepts the competition, is the ideal picture of a skier . . ."

Schneider once summed up the early Fanck films by saying, "These . . . films, which were run in cinemas all over the world, showed the mass of skiers that this skiing was something different from what one was used to seeing until then. Even those who believed themselves to be first class skiers had to perceive that the skiing which was shown by me and some of my associates . . . was something quite different and, in respect to speed, style and control, had never been seen before."

Fanck made films almost continuously thereafter, with Schneider appearing in enough of them so that his clientele and the reach of the Arlberg mystique grew dramatically.

His and Fanck's next film was *Der Heilige Berg*, or *The*

*Holy Mountain* and was noteworthy for the appearance of the ambitious Leni Riefenstahl. She had been a rising star on Germany's dance stage until she decided to accept the role of female lead in *Der Heilige Berg*.

The film was a hit. The movie critic of the *Tiroler Anzeiger* writing in the September 18, 1926 edition of the paper, said, "Fanck's previous films fade into the background by comparison with the wonders of 'Heilige Berg,' which one can view only with silent awe at the shattering, overwhelming beauty of nature in the raw and the baring of the soul."

The critic for *Wiener Neueste Nachrichten*, writing in September 24, 1926 edition, said, "Schneider, the famous skier, whom we still remember from *Wunder des Schneeschuhs* and *Fuchsjagd in Engadin* outdid himself in UFA's 'Der Heilige Berg.'" The film catapulted Fanck into the top ranks of European directors of silent film and drew much attention to Riefenstahl.

Next Schneider and Fanck shot *Die Weisse Kunst* or *The White Art* at St. Anton and Zermatt, a technical film that showed Arlberg from snowplow to *gelandesprung* in the first slow-motion sequences ever taken of skiing. Fanck and Schneider then

(continued on next page)



Director Arnold Fanck paired a short and a tall skier as ski clowns to make fun of the idea that it was possible to learn to ski by reading a book: the short clown (at the left above) was Guzzi Lantschner, later an alpine medalist in the 1936 Olympics. Fanck even shot him jumping, book in hand (below).





The film opens with Schneider teaching leading lady Leni Riefenstahl to ski (left above) and the climax came when Riefenstahl became a skier with skill enough to become Schneider's partner as the two became foxes, chased by all the rest. The scene as they flee together (right) was as romantic as the plot became. The emphasis was clowning and fast skiing.

used stills from the film to illustrate their collaboration, the first technique book illustrated by stills. The book so outclassed all previous technique books that within a year after publication in 1927, *Das Wunder des Schneeschuhe* sold a hundred thousand copies. Translations sold additional hundreds of thousands. It is still the best-selling ski book of all time.

In 1931, Fanck and Schneider shot their last film together, by all measures their most ambitious and the most successful, *Die Weisse Rausch* or *White Ecstasy*. Its predecessors had been silent films but this had a sound track on which the theme was adapted from a traditional Austrian ski song by Paul Dessau, conductor of the Berlin Opera. (The song: "Zwoa Brett, am gfuertiger Schnee, juhe!" translated to English as the classic American ski song, "Two Boards on Cold Powder Snow").

"Ecstasy" was a frothy comedy featuring Schneider as a ski instructor and Riefenstahl as a rank beginner. After she learns to ski, Riefenstahl and Schneider become fellow foxes in a traditional game of "fox chase" on skis. "Ecstasy" premiered in November 1931 in Vienna and was released to 180 theaters in Germany. (The English release was entitled *The Ski Chase*.) Its success exceeded all expectations; film critics praised it to the skies.

Fanck never went to make other films but Schneider had been injured several times in the course of the filmmaking and retired at age 41 at the peak of his film career.

"Ecstasy" established Riefenstahl as a star, giving her the leverage to make her directorial debut in a film starring herself, *Das blaue Licht* or *The Blue Light* was a mystical drama based on a Dolomite folk tale. The film, released in 1932, won a silver at the 1932 Venice Biennale and ran for months in Times Square, New York. It launched Riefenstahl on a distinguished and controversial career as a director. "Blue Light" was the very sort of thing that the Nazis liked: as Kracauer put it, "her role . . . conforms to a political regime which relies

on intuition, worships nature and cultivates myths." Hitler saw it — and asked to meet Riefenstahl. She shortly became an object of his affections, at least for a while.

Hitler commissioned Riefenstahl to direct films of the Nazi Party's 1933 and 1934 rallies. Her 1934 film, *Triumph of The Will*, was a brilliant propaganda film still shown for its cinematic values. Thereafter, Hitler gave Riefenstahl exclusive film rights to both the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin and the Winter Olympics at Garmisch. Riefenstahl produced a stunning two-part documentary *Olympia* unsurpassed in its time, becoming a classic of documentary film-making.

In March 1938, the Nazis annexed Austria to Germany. One of their first acts under the Anschluss, or Annexation was to imprison Schneider, seize his house and turn his wife and two children into the street. Riefenstahl may well have had something to do with it. She and Schneider had quarreled bitterly during the making of "Ecstasy." Schneider told friends he had rejected Riefenstahl's overtures, but whatever the cause, her animosity was obvious when one of Schneider's instructors, Friedl Pfeifer,



Schneider outruns the hounds.

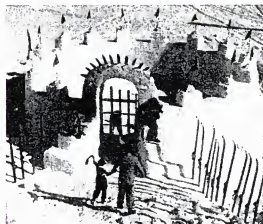
ran into her shortly after the Nazis took over and reported that Riefenstahl had said, "Well, you should be happy now that this 'schweinehund' Schneider has been arrested after the way he exploited you all these years!"

But there was an international uproar about it, with articles on the front page of the *New York Times*. Schneider's imprisonment was commuted to house arrest in Munich and, after a bout of arm-twisting by American banker Harvey Dow Gibson who had leverage regarding payment of Germany's international loans, Schneider and his family were allowed to emigrate. In February, 1939, Schneider became ski school director at Gibson's Mt. Cranmore in North Conway, New Hampshire.

Schneider was lucky. He got out. Arnold Fanck was not so lucky; he was trapped. Because he was Jewish, he was banned from working by Dr. Goebbels, Hitler's propaganda minister. And yet Fanck survived the war. He lived out his days in ill health and near-poverty in Freiburg.

The Fanck-Schneider films were important in the annals of skiing beyond all others filmed since. These films supplied a decisive impetus to alpine skiing at a point when the sport could quite easily have remained sequestered among the elite as a pastime of the rich. But spurred by the image of Schneider the all conquering hero of these

films, the sport of alpine skiing recruited the critical mass of skiers necessary at this point to launch the sport's unprecedented expansion into its future as the winter sport of sixty million worldwide. \*



Schneider is finally caught and put into the elaborate snow-fox cage.

## Let's Revive Singing

On the final night that we were all in Sun Valley we went to The Trail Creek Cabin for dinner -- one of Ernest Hemingway's favorite spots in Sun Valley. Thor Heyerdahl played the accordion for us while we all sang songs such as *It Happened In Sun Valley*.

"The great singing session that we had at the banquet gave me pause," said one ardent singer. "What happened to all the great old ski songs, and why aren't they sung anymore?"

Another was heard to say, "How about getting some members, with an ear for pitch, to form a double quartet to sing as entertainment for next year's meeting. With some research and a rehearsal beforehand it would be a lot of fun."

There was enthusiastic agreement to make an effort to save the audio as well as the video part of our skiing heritage.

The Ancient Skiers (see page 4) are having a get-together in June at the Paradise Inn on Mt. Rainier. They plan an evening of singing songs like *Underneath The Takeoff, Ninety Pounds Of Rucksack and Two Boards Upon Cold Powder Snow*.

If you have some ski songs, whether on paper, tape or record, or if you would like to sing, write to *Skiing Heritage*.

### *It Happened in Sun Valley*

It happened in Sun Valley  
Not so very long ago  
There were sunbeams in the snow  
And a twinkle in your eye  
I remember oh so clearly  
That you nearly passed me by  
Then it happened in Sun Valley  
When you slipped and fell  
And so did I!

### *Two Boards on Cold Powder Snow*

(Words and Tune from Austrian Ski Song "Zwoa Brett")

The years may have more than one season

But I can remember but one,

The time when the rivers are freezin'

And the mountains with whiteness are spun,

The snowflakes are falling so fast,

And winter has come now at last.

Two boards upon cold powder snow, Yo Ho!

What else does a man need to know?

Two boards upon cold powder snow, Yo Ho!

That's all a man needs to know.

The hiss of your skis is a passion;

You cannot imagine a spill!

When, Bang! — there's a godawful gash in

The smooth shining track on the hill

What's happened you can't understand'

There's two splintered boards in your hand.

Two boards and some snow down your neck, Oh heck!

Your skis are a hell of a wreck

Two boards and some snow down your neck, Oh heck!

Your skis are a hell of a wreck.

I care not for government taxes,

Take everything else that I own.

But leave me my boards and my waxes,

In the mountains, just put me alone.

The snowflakes are falling so fast,

And winter has come now at last.

LEGEND SAYS that if you burn a pair of skis in a bonfire as an offering to Ullr, the Norse god of winter, he will reward you with snow.

Early this winter there had not been much natural snow here in Maine and the cross-country skiing was virtually non-existent. We needed some help.

On Friday, January 29, I told my co-workers about Ullr and the legend. I said I was going to burn some skis during the week-end. They smiled.

The forecast was for flurries with an inch or two possible on Sunday. I warned them to be careful driving in on Monday. They smiled again.

I picked a pair of Fisher Alpine Deluxe wooden skis and cleaned and tuned them up. They burned well. Flames took the smoke up into the wind and the dark Saturday afternoon clouds.

On Sunday morning it started snowing and didn't stop. On Monday morning, instead of the clear skies that were forecast, we were still in the middle of a winter storm. The falling, drifting snow made travel difficult. Most businesses in Portland closed early Monday.

"Storm Takes State By Surprise," read Tuesday's headlines. "A persistent storm defies forecasts," said the articles.

It was still snowing.

I smiled. I'm sure that Ullr was smiling also.

*Glenn Parkinson*

# ULLR FEST



Breckenridge Ski Resort in Colorado holds an annual week-long Ullr Fest. Patricia Keenan is the artist for this year's poster, commissioned by the Breckenridge Resort Chamber.



## SKIING HERITAGE

**International Skiing History Association**  
**The Parsonage, 499 Town Hill Road**  
**New Hartford, CT 06057**



"History of the National Ski Association  
 and the Ski Sport", 1931





Double Gelandesprung: Richard Werle and Sigfried Engle on Baldy, Sun Valley, photo by L.R. Arnold, SKI ILLUSTRATED, Dec, 1940



### SKIING HERITAGE

International Skiing History Association  
The Parsonage, 499 Town Hill Road  
New Hartford, CT 06057



SKI Magazine, March 1, 1949



Five years ago when my mother, Earline Marsh, and I first talked about publishing a ski newsletter, we envisioned it containing a variety of information — and being fun to read. With my keen interest in ski history, we would include bits of history. SNOW NEWS was a good name for this type of publication.

In 1989 Mason Beekley was forming the International Skiing History Association and wanted a regular publication for his association. Mason, Earline and I agreed that our interests were compatible and our missions remarkably similar. SNOW NEWS became the journal of the International Skiing History Association.

At the Board of Directors meeting last spring in Whistler/Blackcomb, Doug Pfeiffer raised the question: is SNOW NEWS the best name for the I.S.H.A. publication.

Before our collaboration with I.S.H.A., SNOW NEWS was the best name. Now that the publication has evolved to its current status, with a fairly serious purpose, the name SNOW NEWS seemed a bit "light". (Even if our goals are more serious this publication will always be fun to read.)

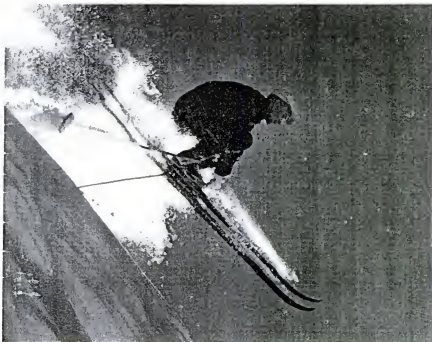
John Fry, editor of SNOW COUNTRY, suggested the name SKIING HERITAGE, and after consultation with the I.S.H.A. Directors, we adopted that name.

"Heritage" means passing on to future generations not only the details and dates of skiing history but also the feeling and the spirit of the sport.

SKIING HERITAGE is now the name of this journal. I hope it accurately reflects the goals of this publication, and just as important, I hope you like the name.

*Glenn*

G. Parkinson, 22 Newell St, Gorham ME 04038



Sergeant Olaf Rodegard, 10th Mountain Division, in a spectacular cornice jump.

Ski Illustrated, March 1944

Olaf is an I.S.H.A. Founder and still an aggressive skier.

## A Second Life on Video

"educating and entertaining a new generation"

by Linda Gray

New England Ski Museum, located in Franconia, New Hampshire, launched its Film Preservation Project in December, 1991, when a successful grant proposal funded the restoration of one of the Museum's prize films, *Dr. Quackenbush Skis the Headwall*. One year later, profits from the sale of *Dr. Quackenbush* videocassettes have funded the production of four additional ski films from the Museum's archives. The goal is to raise enough money to restore each of the Museum's 300-plus films and make them available to ski historians, the media, and the public.

*The next film to be restored is the world famous Ski Chase, another of Dr. Arnold Fancik and Hannes Schneider's alpine masterpieces. Funds to restore the film came from the Special Opportunities Fund of the International Skiing History Association.*

The strategy was a simple one. We chose a highly marketable film with the potential to raise enough capital to sustain the ongoing project. When the Mt. Washington Valley based Pequawket Foundation funded our grant proposal, work was begun to restore *Dr. Quackenbush*. The 16mm film was cleaned and transferred to a videotape (*Second Life, continued on page 2*)

## SKIING HERITAGE

Journal of the International Skiing History Association

Published Quarterly

Editor: Glenn A. Parkinson

Publisher: Earline V. Marsh

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from days gone by, and are used with permission.

(Second Life, continued from page 1)

master using state of the art archival equipment. A musical soundtrack was produced by filmmaker Rick Moulton and dubbed into the video master. Since the video's release in February, 1992, national ski magazines have provided superb coverage and together with NESM's marketing efforts several thousand dollars have been raised from mail order sales.

During the past summer four new films were transferred and duplicated onto VHS cassettes. Additional sponsorship has been provided by Penny Pitou, the Eastern Slope Inn, and AT&T. The videos include the 1932 German mountain epic *Stalom*, the 1939 classic *Ski Larks*, John Jay's 1952 *Olympic Victory*, and the official 1960 Olympic film *Flame in the Snow*.

The next film to be restored (available January 1, 1993) is the world famous *Ski Chase*, also known as *Der Weise Rausch* or *White Intoxication*. Another of Dr. Arnold Fanck's alpine masterpieces, the feature-length comedy stars Hannes Schneider and Leni Riefenstahl. The 1931 vintage film was recently donated to NESM by Edward Brady of Seattle, Washington and the funds to restore the film have been donated by the International Skiing History Association from their Special Opportunities fund.

Until a year ago the high cost of archival restoration seemed out of reach for NESM's modest budget. By building up an inventory of marketable films, funds are being generated to restore some of the lesser known films with high historical value but relatively low entertainment appeal. Now the once brittle and aging films are being rescued one by one from unprojectable fate and are beginning a second life on video, educating and entertaining a new generation. \*

Linda Gray is Director of New England Ski Museum.

To order the video, the *Ski Chase*, sponsored by the Special Opportunities Fund of I.S.H.A., call the New England Ski Museum at 603/823-7177 or write NESM, PO Box 267, Franconia, NH 03580.

## Tips and Tales

Happy Birthday to Hjalmar Hvam, who turned 90 on November 15. Hjalmar was a four event skier and was featured with his Saf-Ski Binding in SNOW NEWS, Summer 1990.

Black Mountain New Hampshire will host Jackson Skiing Legends on January 14-16 -- a nostalgic look at skiing's past and the people who made it happen. Included will be a Legends' Race -- old attire and equipment required -- a film festival and fondue party. Call 603-383-4490 for more information.

The site of the 1984 Winter Olympic games, Sarajevo, in the former Yugoslavia, is now cut off from the world at large and its war-torn people face a harsh winter. Ski Industries America, SIA, a trade association representing manufacturers of equipment and clothing, has sent 8,000 pounds of new ski clothing, worth over \$350,000, in a relief effort named Operation Ski Lift.

The fifth Annual Veteran Ski Instructors Reunion was held Dec. 11-13 at Park City Ski Area. As in past years Bill Lash was the organizing force behind the reunion. He says, "To many of us who began skiing and teaching decades ago, the Arlbergers were the center of skiing. More than the Arlberg technique it was the individual teachers of the Hannes Scheider era that left an impression on the sport. This year we honored Freid Pfeifer and Herbert Schneider." For further information contact Bill Lash in care of Kim Stevens at P.O. Box 39, Park City, Utah, 84060.

Kids of all ages take note! The US Ski Team is introducing its first set of trading cards, produced in conjunction with Erin Maxx Marketing of Canada. The 50 card set, priced at \$15, will profile ski racers, such as Julie Parisien and AJ Kitt, on the 1992-93 alpine team. (See SKI 50th Anniversary issue, March, 1986, page 142: "Advertising man Terry Heckler developed the idea of Bubble Gum Cards as a media promotion for K2 in 1971. Featuring offset tales of ex-racers such as Spider Sabich and Chuck Ferries ... the cards earned K2 a 'fun bunch' reputation.")

In 1972 Warren Witherell wrote a book titled *How the Racers Ski*. This book first used the term "to carve a turn." Warren has recently purchased the remaining copies of the book and is offering them to collectors at \$15.00 each. Contact Warren at 8414 Kings Cove Dr., Salt Lake City, Utah, 84121.



The Special Opportunities Fund has been set up by I.S.H.A. to support significant opportunities such as NESM's film preservation project. I.S.H.A. is pleased to aid in the preservation of *The Ski Chase*.

This One



# The 10th Mountain Division *A Resource Compendium*

Rather than seek an historical article to commemorate the 50th anniversary year of the 10th Mountain Division, SKIING HERITAGE contacted Richard M. Wilson for information about how readers could research for themselves these significant years in American military history. Dick Wilson is vice-president of the National Association of the 10th Mountain Division, Inc. and editor of the *BLIZZARD*, a quarterly publication "by and for soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division". Thanks go to Dick for his valuable contribution.

The major source for historical background about the 10th Mountain Division currently is the 10th Mountain Division Resource Center, joint project of the Denver Public Library (Western Historical Division) and the Colorado Historical Society. The Resource Center is described in detail in an article written by Barbara Walton and Georgianna Contiguglia in the *BLIZZARD*, 2nd quarter 1992, page 5. They wrote, "The 10th Mountain Division Resource Center was founded in 1987 to help preserve the documents, photographs, clothing and equipment which are the raw materials historians need to tell the remarkable story of the 10th Mountain Division and its members. The Resource Center has processed approximately 180 archival collections and has prepared a finding aid to assist researchers in using the collections. The computer catalog — which serves 14,000 research libraries throughout the country and abroad — provides access to the collection in Denver. Most recently, the Resource Center has undertaken the recording of oral histories of 10th Mountaineers. The Resource Center is working to establish a list of interviews already recorded by others and to develop a plan for additional interviews."

Requests for information should be directed to Barbara Walton, 10th Mountain Division Resource Center, Denver Public Library, 1357 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203-2165; phone 303/640-8886.

Many films about the 10th Mountain Division have been produced, most of which have been transferred to videocassette. Information may be obtained from the film librarian, H. Newcomb Eldredge, PO Box 539, Newport, NH 03773, phone 603/863-3636 or 1381.

An emerging project, to be undertaken by Dick Wilson, after his stint as volunteer editor of the *BLIZZARD*, is the compilation of a comprehensive bibliography of the many articles and books published about the 10th Mountain Division over the years during and since World War II. (A preliminary bibliography does exist.) Another project in Dick's domain is "the compilation of a roster of 10th Mountain Division veterans who played an all-important role in the development of America's post-war ski industry, including resort developers/owners/operators, ski instructors/coaches, equipment designers/manufacturers, ski shop proprietors, ski writers, editors, competitors, ski patrol members, ad infinitum. It is a challenging endeavor — and one that needed to be done," he says. He adds, "This roster is not yet ready to be published for use by ski historians. Perhaps some I.S.H.A. experts would be interested in lending a hand."



SKI ILLUSTRATED, February, 1944

Subscription rate for the *BLIZZARD*, for non-members, is \$20.00 per year. Requests for information may be addressed to editor Dick Wilson, PO Box 269, Ft Thomas, KY, 41075, 606/781-3503 (home) 606/441-7300 (office); national president Arthur F. Muschler, 708/833-8154 or national executive secretary Gene Baker, 708/834-2966

Dick Wilson, an I.S.H.A. Associate, wrote a brief biography: "I was a dedicated postwar ski bum — instructor, ski patrolman and racer of little note; the first managing editor of *National SKIING*, forerunner to *SKIING*, and later editor of *Ski Views for the U.S. Ski Association*; Denver public relations/marketing consultant for several Rocky Mountain area ski resorts; editor, the *BLIZZARD* 1986-92. I am currently active at the national level in skiing for the disabled and serve on the advisory board for the National Handicapped Sports Association."

Compiled and edited by Earline V. Marsh

Ernest O. Pederson, I.S.H.A. Founder #52, died in January, 1992. Ernie was international intercollegiate four-way ski champion of Canada and the United States in 1927, 28, 29 and 30, in downhill, slalom and cross-country races, and ski jumping events. In 1968 he was elected to the National Ski Hall of Fame.

A long military career included service in World War II as rifle company commander of the 87th Mountain Infantry Division and then as executive officer of the Mountain Warfare Training Center at Camp Hale, Colorado.

He entered the service of the U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC in 1958. Ernie retired from diplomatic service in 1963; and from the US Army Reserve in 1967 with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

From the *New England Ski Museum Newsletter*, Fall 1992



*In the golden age of cross-country ski racing of the 1950s through the mid 1970s, Norwegian Blå Skia ("The Blue Skis") were a marque of choice of racers round the globe. Yet Ivar Halvorsen and his workmen in the hamlet of Nittedal seldom made more than 8,000 pairs a year. Craftsmanship and creative contact with the sport were the company resources.* MMB

"We didn't realize it then, but we were the renaissance racers." Thus Odd Martinsen summarizes his career as a cross-country racer, from 1959 through 1978, the era of revival and transition of the sport.

As a boy growing up in the rural Nittedal, a half-hour drive north of Oslo, Norway, Martinsen started racing on wood skis. Packing courses on foot and on skis was part of racing, skating was a technique reserved for fun on frozen lakes, and direct TV coverage of sporting events was something only Americans enjoyed, remotely viewing games from their big stadiums. Two decades later, wood was out and fiberglass was in all racing skis, course were packed by machines, skating was on its way to becoming a new division of the sport, and all major and many minor races were covered directly on TV.

Martinsen's talent was unquestionable and now a matter of record: with six Olympic and FIS World Ski Championship medals, he was one of the era's top international racers. And he raced more than most, in 63 races in 1968, 65 races in 1969, and 67 races in 1970. Quick starts were his hallmark, which is why he often ran first in a relay. Twice, in the 1966 Nordic World Ski Championships and the 1968 Olympic Winter Games, the strategy helped win gold for Norway. "Relay Martin" became his nickname throughout Scandinavia.

"His talent was clear," says Ivar Halvorsen, Martinsen's first coach and mentor, who recalls that "I saw an inborn skill in the

# Ivar Halvorsen:

way he handled track and terrain, like watching a top violinist put bow to strings." And Halvorsen knew his subject. Born and bred where winters are long and taiga (northern snow forest), terrain and local interest favor cross-country ski racing, he had early set out to be a racer. But like many of the generation of racers that had grown up in the tough 1930s, his racing career had been amputated by World War II, when ski racing was banned in occupied Norway.

After the War he resumed racing and sought other ways to be involved in skiing. In 1952 he opened a small woodworking and ski making workshop in a remodelled barn. He had no starting capital, only skills. During the War he had worked as a cabinet maker, and before, from 1931, when he was 15, until the War came to Norway in 1940, he had been an apprentice in his uncle's ski factory. Soon skis took the upper hand, and by the mid 1950s he converted the workshop to full-time ski making under the name "Ivar Halvorsen's Ski Factory".

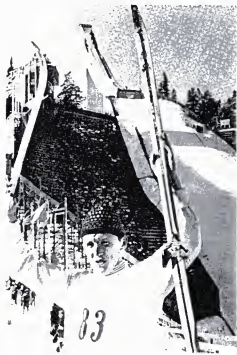
"The test track began at the door," Halvorsen remembers, "so I always had quick feedback." Yet the test track could not supply an answer to a question that had long plagued him, from his earliest apprentice days: what should a ski look like? His cabinet maker skills dictated that though appearance and function were obviously related, appearance was often the best key to efficient use. A ski should literally "say what it's for."

The cross-country skis of the day were of wood and showed it: "All were in shades of brown, like the trees around and the handles of farm implements. To the eye, that's not speed," he reasoned. Friend and fellow coach Gunnar Finstad returned from the 1956 Olympic Winter Games in Cortina with a clue to resolving the quandary — the Alpine racing skis he had seen there were painted, in colors: might paint help the appearance of a cross-country ski?

In the tradition-bound Norwegian ski world of the time, the thought was nigh heretical; skis were golden brown and that was that. But Finstad was no man to be dissuaded by tradition: three decades before the "Telemark Renaissance," he taught Alpine ski instructors Nordic skills and vice versa, to "enliven the middle ground." Halvorsen was of like mind, so why not innovate? With a bit of traditional Norwegian blue kitchen paint and overnight drying in the workshop, the first pair of blue skis were out on the test track the day after.

The results were electric. "The skis were no faster, they just looked it," he recalls. So he painted five more pairs of skis and gave them to local skiers to use in the 35km Vidar race. Many self-proclaimed experts scoffed, but the racers from Nittedal were remembered for their top results and for having achieved them on blue skis. So Halvorsen made 400 pairs of blue skis for the 1956-57 racing season, and sold them all, in advance. Years before psychology became part of the preparation for racing, he had come upon one of the vital ingredients of racing success: the racer's own self perception of speed also counts. The skis became popular and the name stuck: the Blå Skia ("The Blue Skis") was born.

Martinsen remembers the impact of his first pair of Blå Skia,



Norwegian racer Odd Martinsen after 1969 Holmenkollen win; he used the Blå Skia he holds aloft in 42 races that year. Martinsen is now Chairman of the Executive Board of the FIS Cross-Country Committee and Chief of the Cross-Country Race Committee of the 1994 Olympic Winter Games. (Photographer unknown)

# The Compleat Ski-Maker

By Michael Brady

which Halvorsen gave him when he was 16. "Not only did I have two pair of skis, one which my coach had given me, but he had made the skis and they were blue." Martinsen explains that in 1950s and early 1960s, the sport was more locally based, particularly in the traditional Nordic countries. Personal, local interaction was vital: local youth, on locally produced skis, tutored by local coaches, traveled to regional and thence to national and international championships. The racer on top was still the kid from the next farm.

The kids from the next farm, and the next, raced well on Blå Skia, and by the mid 1960s, Halvorsen had nine employees and a modern factory, just slightly larger than the original remodeled barn. As cross-country racers Odd Martinsen and Ivar Forno and biathlete Jon Istad took Olympic and World Championship medals on Blå Skia, queries poured in from abroad and racers visiting Norway invariably found their way to the factory.

Yet Halvorsen remained the local ski craftsman. No wood used in the 30-some laminates of a racing ski was considered worthy until it had been proven on the local test track. No new design could be sold until it had been proven in local races. The results were sometimes astounding, even by today's high-tech standards: the pair of skis that Martinsen used in winning a silver medal in the 30 km and a gold in the relay of the 1968 Grenoble Winter Olympics weighed just 1300 grams. "And that," Martinsen is careful to point out, "is for a 215 cm pair. Skimakers now state pair weights for 200 cm pairs, and not many are lighter." Weight alone was not the whole story: Blå Skia were among the first to have purpose-built cambers, so stiffer skis could be zone waxed for klistler conditions.

The secret was the craftsmanship underlying the speed connoted by the blue stripe on the skis. Woods were always carefully dried and mechanically matched, and all skis were made in pairs. Birch, beech, fir, hickory and balsa were all used, each to its own advantage, like the various constituent components of a carefully crafted violin or cabinet. Word of Blå Skia quality performance spread. Save for the traditional rivals Sweden and Finland, who were obliged by national pride to use the products of their own makers, Blå Skia became one of the more popular international racing skis. In the 1968 Winter Olympics, in addition to Norwegians, Australian, Austrian, Canadian, Danish, Polish, Swiss and U.S. racers and biathletes used Blå Skia.

And although skiers from around the world sought them out, Ivar and Margit Halvorsen remained the hospitable country town hosts, in the best of Norwegian rural tradition. "You go there to pick out skis, which takes about half an hour, but then there's dinner, which takes two hours," remarked Mike Gallagher, the top U.S. racer of the time. And then there were always the local kids, for whom Ivar always had time to coach. "I'm not going to produce more skis than I can put

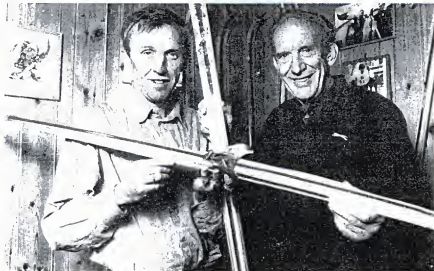
my hands on in a year," he once remarked when asked why he didn't increase production to meet the demand that exceeded his capacity of about 8,000 pairs, "and some of that handling must be on snow."

That close relationship with the performance of his product gave Halvorsen an enviably realistic view. When sponsorship became more common in the early 1970s, he reasoned that "you cannot pay racers to race on inferior skis, so performance, not marketing, still counts." The flip side of that view came soon: after Swedish racer Thomas Magnusson won the 30 km event, the first of the 1974 Nordic World Ski Championships, on fiberglass skis, Halvorsen was among the first to admit that the days of wood skis were then limited. No matter that Magnusson had won on klistler on wet snow, where the fiberglass skis of 1974 outperformed wood, and Norwegian Magne Myrmo won the 15 km event a few days later, on dry snow on wood skis; Halvorsen knew the trend was irreversible.

Part of the trend, he knew, would be that smaller ski factories could no longer compete, even at the local level. "A fiberglass ski is more of an industrial product. It's made of inert material, quite unlike a wood ski that is more alive, more subject to varying temperature and absorbed moisture. So a fiberglass ski can be made and marketed like other industrial products." Nonetheless, he switched and produced in fiberglass until he closed the factory upon retiring in the early 1980s. Landsem produced Blå Skia for a few seasons until it also fell victim to the industrialized trend that Halvorsen had correctly predicted.

Retired widower Ivar Halvorsen still skis, and sometimes races, among the taiga and in the terrain that spawned Blå Skia. The factory building beside his home now stands vacant, a mute monument to a modern skiing fable. Fittingly, it is located on Eventyrveien — "Fable Street". \*

Michael Brady is an I.S.H.A. Director and lives in Oslo, Norway.



Odd Martinsen, left, Ivar Halvorsen right, with Martinsen's record-light Blå Skia racing skis used in 1968 Winter Olympics.

Photo by Frits Solvang, taken September 1992

## Paper Preservation Procedures That Make a Difference

by Dennis Curran  
Brown's River Bindery, Inc  
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### Keep the temperature stable

- hold the thermostat around 65° Fahrenheit
- do not change the heat or air conditioning settings at night or on weekends
- protect materials from direct exposures to radiant heat or air conditioning sources
- foster good air circulation in storage rooms to minimize effects of indoor atmospheric pollution: e.g. the bottom shelf storage should be at least 6 inches off the floor
- keep a thermometer in the storage area to check for temperature fluctuations

### Keep the humidity stable

- maintain relative humidity around 50%
- use humidity indication devices to check humidity levels
- install humidifiers/dehumidifiers, if necessary, to stabilize humidity levels
- avoid opening windows

### Protect material from light sources

- fluorescent light is extremely damaging: install UV filters over fluorescent tubes; they are inexpensive
- control the amount of natural light entering the storage area
- keep top shelves at least four feet below ceiling lights
- keep the lights off as much as possible

### Handle with care

- wash your hands thoroughly before handling materials
- do not place too much stress on a book's binding when photocopying
- never use pressure sensitive scotch or magic mending tape

SKIING HERITAGE wants to promote the care and storage of your valuable collections. We contacted Dennis Curran, a specialist in paper preservation at Brown's River Bindery, a nationally recognized business devoted to the preservation of public records, books and documents. While his guidelines represent the "ideal", we hope you will read them and make decisions to improve your care and storage techniques. For example, do you have valuable paper material stored in an unheated attic, or in a potentially damp basement or garage?

Dennis sent us a wealth of material, including articles and books on paper preservation. In his travels throughout the United States, Dennis presents a Paper Preservation Workshop, which includes the showing of "Slow Fires: On the Preservation of the Human Record", a film narrated by Robert MacNeil and sponsored by the Library of Congress and National Endowment for the Humanities. *Dennis Curran, Brown's River Bindery, One Allen Martin Drive, Essex, VT 05451, 802/878-3335.*

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## Acid Based Paper: In Danger of Disintegration

The following is excerpted from a discussion with Dr. Wavell F. Cowan, internationally renowned papermaking scientist.

**SKIING HERITAGE:** As I.S.H.A. promotes the preservation of valuable documents related to ski history, we'd like to share information with our readers. In what general time period would acid-based paper be a concern?

**WFC:** Essentially all commercially produced paper would be a concern; this would cover more than the last hundred years. Commercial papermakers discovered that it was easier to make paper if you used additives which were acidic in nature, so papers were produced that would always be acidic.

**SH:** So that became the standard way that paper was made?

**WFC:** Yes, because it solved a huge problem. There's a lot of gummy material in trees, and it starts to build up on the papermachine. Papermakers found that the presence of this aluminum - papermakers' alum it was called - tended to keep that stuff dispersed. When it became evident that acid was the primary reason for paper disintegrating, chemical companies had to find a non-acidic dispersant. Now an increasing number of mills are making acid free paper and selling it at a premium, particularly during the last ten years.

**SH:** Is there a viable process to de-acidify books?

**WFC:** If you're serious about preserving paper on a long term basis, consult a professional group who would have the technology to guarantee to treat your documents and give them back to you in good condition. Obviously there's a lot of interest in this

area because there are huge quantities of material in libraries, in danger of disintegrating.

**SH:** Is there another option, other than professional treatment of documents?

**WFC:** The alternative is to store documents under conditions in which they don't see light, in which they're dry - and then don't use them. But that's not the purpose of preserving documents.

The following is excerpted from a discussion with Dr. Derek Page, director of research at the Pulp and Paper Research Institute of Canada

**DP:** There was a rare and valuable book in New York City, in a sad condition of deterioration. An extensive search resulted in locating another copy of the book in Brussels, in far better condition. The heat and humidity of New York, and the more acid air, accounted for the difference in condition.

**SH:** Can the deterioration of a book be arrested with current preservation technology?

**DP:** Yes. Quite successfully. It remains a relatively slow and expensive process, very difficult to do for quantities.

**SH:** Does photocopying injure a book or magazine?

**DP:** No, but you must be careful how you handle them, especially being careful of the binding of a book.

**SH:** What about so-called permanent paper in the future?

**DP:** There continues to be ongoing research. But questions remain about what material merits permanent paper -- and what standard to set for permanent paper; it's more expensive to make paper that will not turn brown with age. It becomes a question of what we're willing to settle for.

EVM

## Our Readers Respond

Charles Dwyer from Colorado, sent us an article on early ski lifts originally printed in the Los Angeles Daily News, January 1992. It caused him to ask the following question:

"My inquiry here regards the phrase used in the article 'according to ski historians'. Who are the recognized ski historians? More important in my field of interest, who are the recognized aerial tramway/ski lift historians?"

One of the objectives of I.S.H.A. is to correct inaccuracies in skiing history and to provide a resource for those who want to study or ask questions about skiing history. The importance of this is driven home by the fact that the sentence in the article Charles refers to is inaccurate. Should there be a recognized body of ski historians? How would we go about creating such a group? What is the best way to prevent inaccuracies from appearing in the media?

In our last issue we had "Stories From The History Of Freestyle". Bruce Carnall, who was an early trick skier, asked for more stories and further research on freestyle skiing. We are pleased to have received a few responses to the request. Here is part of a letter sent to us by Robert Fisher from New Hampshire.

"As usual we enjoyed the most recent issue of SNOW NEWS, especially "Stories From The History Of Freestyle" to which I feel moved to add this footnote. Peter Pinkham of North Conway deserves mention for having inaugurated the first formal freestyle competition, called Ski Masters, in January 1966 at Attitash. A two day event, Ski Masters consisted of demonstrations such as the snowplow turn and the stem christy followed by a free run. I have to admit that after the first several years of competition the repetitive nature of the compulsory forms were about as exciting as watching paint dry, although the free runs remained exciting during the nine years the competition flourished."

From Maine, Walter Stump, whose three children were in a ski school program run by Ruedi Wyrsch, adds these comments:

"In 1969 Ruedi started a program to teach the kids to be better skiers. At the time there was no such thing as freestyle skiing. Ruedi was a perfectionist and wanted to teach the kids Final Form or proper technique. They would have competitions with one run being a snowplow turn and the next being a stem christy. Their last run was a free run where the kids could do whatever they wanted. Ruedi had shown them tricks which they did in their free run. Over time the free run got longer and more elaborate. That was the start of ballet skiing."

We continue to look for more stories from the history of freestyle and appreciate you sending us information. In doing research on early winter carnivals we have found a reference to John Thorne who did trick skiing at the Rumford Maine Winter Carnival in 1926. Can you help us with information on John Thorne and what he was doing for tricks?

As you know we have been compiling a listing of ski museums world wide. Uberto Stefanutti from Italy has been very helpful and has sent us information on several museums. He writes:

"Skiing in Italy is very popular but we have no ski museums. I enclose articles on ski museums in Kitzbuhel Austria and Tarnaby Sweden. The articles are from the latest F.I.S. bulletins."

The true history and heritage of skiing rests in the stories and memories that you have and we thank you for sharing them with us.

SKIING HERITAGE, Glenn Parkinson, 22 Newell St., Gorham, ME 04038  
I.S.H.A., Mason Beekley, The Parsonage, 499 Town Hill Rd., New Hartford, CT 06057



"Some protection for the eyes against snow blindness is essential. The trouble with goggles is they are apt to become dimmed with perspiration. For some years I have used nothing but this simple appliance which I have found to afford ample protection everywhere.

It is made of a bit of old shoe leather and a piece of string. A notch is cut for the nose and an oval shaped hole opposite each eye. This will afford a great deal of protection."

The Ski - Runner, by E.C. Richardson, published in London, 1909



Wilson Goggles "If you knew the comfort behind good goggles, you would protect your eyes from wind, snowglare and bright sunlight. Come in and try on a pair; we have them in a score of styles." *Tri-State Pictorial, Feb 11, 1924, Brattleboro, Vermont.*



"NORTHLAND VISOR - The plastic used in the shield comes in smoke or amber color. It is light weight and non-inflammable. An adjustable leather band fits over the forehead. The shield is hinged to this and can be raised or lowered as desired. It does not touch the face at any point and will not fog." *Northland Ski Catalogue 1941*